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PCT

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(PCT Rule 61.2)

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in its capacity as elected Office

Date of mailing: <p style="text-align: center;">05 April 2001 (05.04.01)</p>	Applicant's or agent's file reference: <p style="text-align: center;">100604</p>
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International filing date: <p style="text-align: center;">25 September 2000 (25.09.00)</p>	
Applicant: <p style="text-align: center;">TURNBULL, Andre</p>	

1. The designated Office is hereby notified of its election made:

☒ in the demand filed with the International preliminary Examining Authority on:

23 January 2001 (23.01.01)

☐ in a notice effecting later election filed with the International Bureau on:

2. The election ☒ was

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(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
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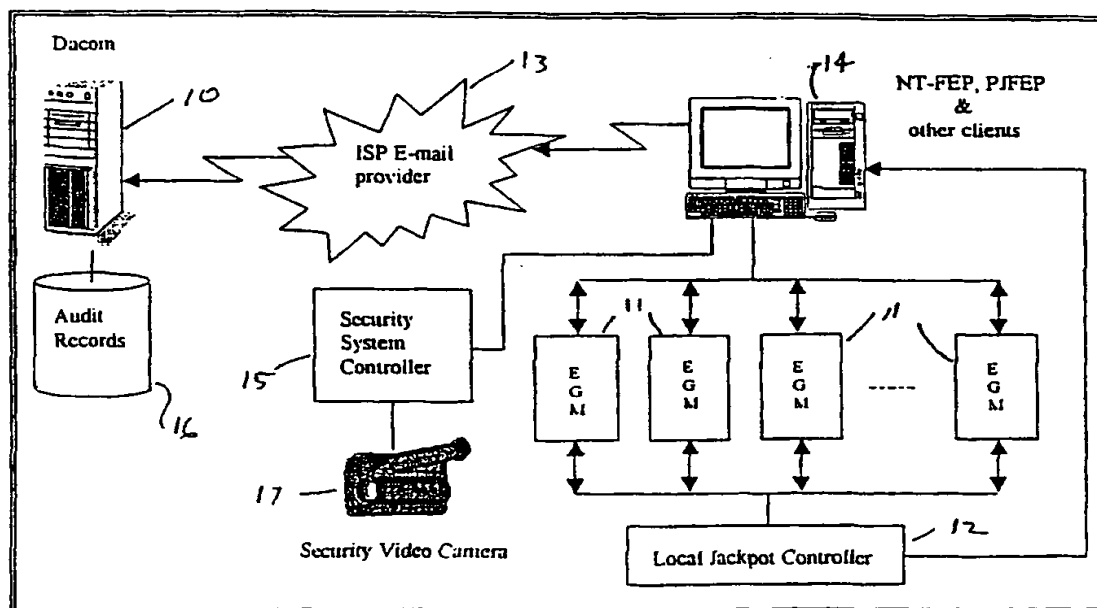
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161/00, A63F 13/12
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For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: MULTIPLE VENUE JACKPOT SYSTEM



(57) Abstract: The master controller is arranged to remotely collect and manage slot machine operations and management information for a complex multi venue network of casinos or other gaming venues. Day to day operating details are collected, recorded, updated and summarised automatically by the master controller. The multiple venues communicate with the master controller by indirect means such as email (via an ISP) or even by media transfer (CD rom, etc). The master controller also communicates pool information back to the multiple venues via the same communication method.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/AU00/01165**A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER**Int. Cl. ⁷: G06F 19/00, 161/00; A63F 13/12

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC G06F, A63F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

AU: IPC AS ABOVE

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

WPAT, USPTO

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	WO 9712338A, WINTECH INVESTMENTS PTY LTD, 3 April 1997	1-6, 17-19
X	US 5655961A, ACRES et al, 12 August 1997	1-5, 17, 18
X	AU 47907/96A, MAVROIDIS, 26 September 1996	1, 2, 17, 18

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C ☒ See patent family annex

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

9 November 2000

Date of mailing of the international search report

20 NOV 2000

Name and mailing address of the ISA/AU

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/AU00/01165

C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	AU 48323/97A, ARISTOCRAT LEISURE INDUSTRIES PTY LTD, 25 June 1998	
A	WO 9412256A, INFINATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES INC, 9 June 1994	
A	WO 9826361A, JACKPOT AS, 18 June 1998	
P,A	US 6089980A, GAUSELMANN, 18 July 2000	

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT
Information on patent family members

International application No.
PCT/AU00/01165

This Annex lists the known "A" publication level patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report. The Australian Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

Patent Document Cited in Search Report		Patent Family Member					
WO	9712338	AU	69806/96	CA	2233039	GB	2323303
		NZ	318340				
US	5655961	AU	27192/95	AU	35878/95	AU	48478/97
		AU	74161/98	WO	9612262	US	5702304
		US	5741183	US	5752882	US	5820459
		US	5836817				
AU	47907/96	NONE					
AU	48323/97	NONE					
WO	9412256	AU	57333/94	CA	2128715	EP	627949
		EP	907136	US	5324035		
US	6089980	AU	24938/97	CA	2208188	DE	19624321
		EP	855074	WO	9749073		
END OF ANNEX							

CLAIMS:

1. A jackpot system for providing jackpots on electronic gaming machines (EGMs) operating in a plurality of EGM venues, each EGM venue having a networked (EGM) installation including one or more EGMs connected via communications network to a network controller, jackpot awarding means arranged to award jackpot prizes to individual EGMs based on a predetermined trigger condition being established, and reporting means arranged to report gaming activity and jackpot events to a master controller located remotely from the respective EGM venue, the EGM installation in each EGM venue maintaining a prize pool from which jackpot prizes are awarded, the prize pool being periodically updated in response to pool information communicated from the master controller to the respective EGM installation.
2. A jackpot system for providing jackpots on electronic gaming machines (EGMs) operating in an EGM venue, the EGM venue having a networked EGM installation including one or more EGMs connected via communications network to a network controller, jackpot awarding means arranged to award jackpot prizes to individual EGMs based on a predetermined trigger condition being established, and communications means arranged to report gaming activity and jackpot events to a master controller located remotely from the respective EGM venue, the EGM installation maintaining a prize pool from which jackpot prizes are awarded, the prize pool being periodically updated in response to pool information provided from the master controller to the EGM installation via the communications mean.
3. The system of claim 1 or 2, wherein the EGM installation in each EGM venue includes a local jackpot controller and a front-end processor, such that the jackpot controller monitors EGM operation, determines the occurrence of jackpot trigger condition, maintains the prize pool information, and awards prizes from the prize pool when trigger condition occurs.
4. The system of claim 3, wherein the front-end processor monitors the operation of local jackpot controller, and the EGMs in the network and gathers statistics for forwarding to the master controller.
5. The system of claim 4, wherein the master controller includes communication means for receiving communications from the front-end

processors at each EGM venue and returning prize pool information to each venue.

6. The system of claim 3, 4 or 5, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is encrypted.

5 7. The system of claim 3, 4, 5, or 6, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via e-mail.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is transmitted over the internet.

9. The system of claim 3, 4, 5, or 6, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via reports printed on paper.

10 10. The system of claim 3, 4, 5, or 6, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data recorded on a recordable media.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data recorded on a magnetic media.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via floppy disc.

13. The system of claim 11, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via magnetic tape.

14. The system as claimed in any one of claims 3 to 13, wherein the front-end processor communicates with a security system, to indicate the identity of each EGM on which a jackpot has been won, the security system including a security video camera, and the security system being responsive to the indication of the identity of each winning EGM to direct the field of view of security video cameras to the area of the respective winning EGM.

15. The system as claimed in any one of claims 3 to 14, wherein the master controller includes an accounting system for gathering accounting information from each of the venues participating in the multiple venue jackpot system, and means for a calculating jackpot pool for each venue based on gaming machine activity at the respective venues.

16. The system as claimed in claim 15, wherein gaming machine activity at each venue is reported to the master controller by the respective front-end processor.

17. A master controller for a jackpot system for providing jackpots on electronic gaming machines (EGMs) operating in a plurality of EGM venues,

each EGM venue having a networked EGM installation including one or more EGMs connected via communications network to a network controller, jackpot awarding means arranged to award jackpot prizes to individual EGMs based on a predetermined trigger condition being established, and reporting means arranged to report gaming activity and jackpot events to the master controller, the master controller being located remotely from at least one of the EGM venues, the EGM installation in each EGM venue maintaining a prize pool from which jackpot prizes are awarded, master controller collecting game statistics from each venue and periodically communicating information to update the prize pool of each EGM installation.

18. The master controller of claim 17, wherein the EGM installation in each EGM venue includes a local jackpot controller and a front-end processor, such that the front-end processor monitors the operation of local jackpot controller, and the EGMs in the network and gathers statistics for forwarding to the master controller and the master controller includes communication means for receiving communications from the front-end processors at each EGM venue and returning prize pool information to each venue.

19. The master controller of claim 18, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is encrypted.

20. The master controller of claim 18 or 19, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via e-mail.

21. The master controller of claim 20, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is transmitted over the internet.

22. The master controller of claim 18 or 19, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via reports printed on paper.

23. The master controller of claim 18 or 19, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data recorded on a recordable media.

24. The master controller of claim 23, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data recorded on a magnetic media.

25. The system of claim 24 wherein, communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via floppy disc.

26. The system of claim 24 wherein, communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via magnetic tape.

27. The system as claimed in any one of claims 18 to 26 wherein, the master controller includes an accounting system for gathering accounting
5 information from each of the venues participating in the multiple venue jackpot system, and means for a calculating jackpot pool for each venue based on gaming machine activity at the respective venues.

28. The system as claimed in claim 27 wherein, gaming machine activity
10 at each venue is reported to the master controller by the respective front-end processor.

Multiple venue jackpot system

Introduction

The present invention relates generally to the provision of jackpots on networked gaming machines and in particular the invention provides a method of awarding a jackpot from a prize pool operated across a plurality of venues.

Background of the Invention

It has become desirable in the past to link gaming machines together into a network of machines for a variety of reasons including, gathering of accounting information and payment of system wide jackpots. In particular, the operation of system wide jackpots has become popular because it increases the size of prizes that can be offered by a gaming machine operator, by allowing the accumulation of a large jackpot pool from which prizes are paid on the basis of a random trigger or some other selection mechanism. Such systems are sometimes operated over a number of venues, but in order to inter connect the venues securely, expensive infrastructure is required.

Unfortunately, such jackpot systems, known as linked systems, have previously only been available to large establishments operating enough machines to enable the collection of a large prize pool in a reasonable period of time, or alternatively groups of establishments having sufficient turnover to be able to justify the expense of the infrastructure required to link multiple sites.

Summary of the Invention

According to a first aspect the present invention provides a jackpot system for providing jackpots on electronic gaming machines operating in a plurality of EGM venues, each EGM venue having a networked electronic gaming machine (EGM) installation including one or more electronic gaming machines (EGMs) connected via communications network to a network controller, jackpot awarding means arranged to award jackpot prizes to individual EGMs based on a predetermined trigger condition being established, and reporting means arranged to report gaming activity and jackpot events to a master controller located remotely from the respective EGM venue, the EGM installation in each EGM venue maintaining a prize pool from which jackpot prizes are awarded, the prize pool being periodically

updated in response to pool information communicated from the master controller to the respective EGM installation.

According to a second aspect the present invention provides a jackpot system for providing jackpots on electronic gaming machines operating in an EGM venue, the EGM venue having a networked electronic gaming machine (EGM) installation including one or more electronic gaming machines (EGMs) connected via a communications network to a network controller, jackpot awarding means arranged to award jackpot prizes to individual EGMs based on a predetermined trigger condition being established, and communications means arranged to report gaming activity and jackpot events to a master controller located remotely from the respective EGM venue, the EGM installation maintaining a prize pool from which jackpot prizes are awarded, the prize pool being periodically updated in response to pool information provide from the master controller to the EGM installation via the communications means.

According to a third aspect the present invention provides a master controller for a jackpot system for providing jackpots on electronic gaming machines operating in a plurality of EGM venues, each EGM venue having a networked electronic gaming machine (EGM) installation including one or more electronic gaming machines (EGMs) connected via communications network to a network controller, jackpot awarding means arranged to award jackpot prizes to individual EGMs based on a predetermined trigger condition being established, and reporting means arranged to report gaming activity and jackpot events to the master controller, the master controller being located remotely from at least one of the EGM venues, the EGM installation in each EGM venue maintaining a prize pool from which jackpot prizes are awarded, master controller collecting game statistics from each venue and periodically communicating information to update the prize pool of each EGM installation.

In one embodiment of the invention, the EGM installation in each EGM venue includes a local jackpot controller and a front-end processor, such that the jackpot controller monitors electronic gaming machine operation, determines the occurrence of jackpot trigger condition, maintains the prize pool information, and awards prizes from the prize pool when trigger condition occurs.

Preferably, the front-end processor monitors the operation of the local jackpot controller, and the electronic gaming machines in the network and gathers statistics for forwarding to the master controller. The front-end processor preferably communicates with the master controller via e-mail or a similar communications carrier. However, as the system does not rely on a real-time response, communication can be via any method including paper reports, tape, floppy disk or other magnetic media, or a variety of other secure communication techniques. For added security, communication between EGM venues and the master controller may also be encrypted.

The front-end processor also preferably communicates with a security system to indicate EGMs on which jackpot has been won, in order that the security system may direct the field of view of security video cameras to the area of the winning machine.

The master controller includes an accounting system for gathering accounting information from each of the venues participating in the multiple venue jackpot system, and means for calculating jackpot pool for each venue based on gaming machine activity at the respective venues as reported by the respective front-end processors. The master controller also includes communication means for receiving communications from the front-end processors at each EGM venue and returning prize pool information to each venue.

Brief description of the Drawing

An embodiment of the invention will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a block diagram illustrating a Multiple venue jackpot system according to the present invention.

Detailed Description of a Preferred Embodiment

Referring to Figure 1, an embodiment of the invention is illustrated, in which a Dacom™ computer system is arranged as a master controller of a multi-venue jackpot system. The master controller is arranged to provide information to help participating venues monitor and optimise slot machine performance and generate statutory reports required by licensing bodies.

The master controller is arranged to collect and manage slot machine operations and management information for a casino or other gaming venue. Day to day operating details can be collected, recorded, updated and summarised automatically by the master controller.

Traditionally controllers of this type have been connected to electronic gaming machines through a physical network of wires. The controller would communicate with a gaming machine through a simple router (FEP) with serial lines. However, using current technology this model can be extended to a more complex multi venue network where the multiple venues and the master controller communicate by indirect means such as email (via an ISP) or even by media transfer (CD rom, etc). Of course, communication can also be via traditional Wide Area Networking techniques.

In the embodiment illustrated in Figure 1, the master controller 10 is arranged to control a bank of slot machines (EGMs) 11 grouped to a local jackpot controller 12. This control is applied through the use of a simple ISP 13 e-mail facility.

The Front-End Processor (NT-FEP) is an application running on a PC 14, the application having the following features:

It maintains a live connection to the gaming floor network of up to several hundreds of slave nodes. Slave node consists of an EGM 11 & Machine Communication Interface (MCI) pair and from a network point of view this pair of devices is treated as a single entity.

Connection of one or more clients over a LAN is supported. Clients may issue request(s) and wait for responses. Significant events are also sent to all clients connected at the time.

It sends significant security events to the on-site security system controller 15 which activates and directs security cameras 17 to the area of the significant security event.

The Progressive Jackpot Front End Processor (PJFEP) is an application also running on the PC 14 with the following features:

It maintains a connection to the Local Jackpot Controller 12.

Connection of one or more clients over LAN is supported. Clients may issue request(s) and wait for responses.

There are several clients running on the same computer system 14 where NT-FEP and PJFEP are running. The most important client is Progressive Jackpot Client (PJClient) with the following features:

It maintains a connection to the NT-FEP and PJFEP applications.

All significant event messages that are generated by the PJClient are stored in digital media.

It performs snapshot of the NTFEP and PJFEP when significant events (eg Jackpot Hit) and data (eg EGM Turnover, Jackpot Level Value) are retrieved. Appropriate log files are created to store these events.

Snapshot time is user configurable.

- 5 Configuration of the PJClient (eg TCP/IP address, snapshot time) can be saved.

The NTFEP and PJFEP servers use a transport layer protocol to connect to PJClient. The NTFEP acts as a server and PJClient establishes its connection. On every snapshot, the PJClient retrieves the current turnover value of all online EGMs 11. These will be recorded onto the log file. If required, the significant security events could be included in these log files as well.

On every snapshot, the PJClient also checks if the Jackpot Controller 12 is still online. If it is, PJClient proceeds to get a snapshot of the current jackpot level value as well as the jackpot hit events that have occurred since the last snapshot. These will be recorded onto the log file as well.

There is another client which at the snapshot time attaches different log files produced by the PJClient for that snapshot time to an email and sends it to the ISP mail server 13.

20 On the other side, the master controller 10 can use an e-mail client to retrieve the e-mails sent from the site and incorporate the data into appropriate fields of the database for later reports. These information will be recorded in the internal audit trail 16 of the master controller system 10.

It is possible for the master controller system 10 to send an e-mail to every site with the group and jackpot configurations for the jackpot controller of that site.

Glossary

EGM	Electronic Gaming Machine
ISP	Internet Service Provider
30 MCI	Machine Communication Interface
NT-FEP	Front End Processor
PJFEP	Progressive Jackpot Front End Processor

It will be appreciated by persons skilled in the art that numerous variations and/or modifications may be made to the invention as shown in the specific embodiments without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention as broadly described. The present embodiments are, therefore, to
5 be considered in all respects as illustrative and not restrictive.

CLAIMS:

1. A jackpot system for providing jackpots on electronic gaming machines (EGMs) operating in a plurality of EGM venues, each EGM venue having a networked (EGM) installation including one or more EGMs connected via communications network to a network controller, jackpot awarding means arranged to award jackpot prizes to individual EGMs based on a predetermined trigger condition being established, and reporting means arranged to report gaming activity and jackpot events to a master controller located remotely from the respective EGM venue, the EGM installation in each EGM venue maintaining a prize pool from which jackpot prizes are awarded, the prize pool being periodically updated in response to pool information communicated from the master controller to the respective EGM installation.
2. A jackpot system for providing jackpots on electronic gaming machines (EGMs) operating in an EGM venue, the EGM venue having a networked EGM installation including one or more EGMs connected via communications network to a network controller, jackpot awarding means arranged to award jackpot prizes to individual EGMs based on a predetermined trigger condition being established, and communications means arranged to report gaming activity and jackpot events to a master controller located remotely from the respective EGM venue, the EGM installation maintaining a prize pool from which jackpot prizes are awarded, the prize pool being periodically updated in response to pool information provided from the master controller to the EGM installation via the communications mean.
3. The system of claim 1 or 2, wherein the EGM installation in each EGM venue includes a local jackpot controller and a front-end processor, such that the jackpot controller monitors EGM operation, determines the occurrence of jackpot trigger condition, maintains the prize pool information, and awards prizes from the prize pool when trigger condition occurs.
4. The system of claim 3, wherein the front-end processor monitors the operation of local jackpot controller, and the EGMs in the network and gathers statistics for forwarding to the master controller.
5. The system of claim 4, wherein the master controller includes communication means for receiving communications from the front-end

processors at each EGM venue and returning prize pool information to each venue.

6. The system of claim 3, 4 or 5, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is encrypted.

5 7. The system of claim 3, 4, 5, or 6, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via e-mail.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is transmitted over the internet.

9. The system of claim 3, 4, 5, or 6, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via reports printed on paper.

10 10. The system of claim 3, 4, 5, or 6, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data recorded on a recordable media.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data recorded on a magnetic media.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via floppy disc.

13. The system of claim 11, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via magnetic tape.

14. The system as claimed in any one of claims 3 to 13, wherein the front-end processor communicates with a security system, to indicate the identity of each EGM on which a jackpot has been won, the security system including a security video camera, and the security system being responsive to the indication of the identity of each winning EGM to direct the field of view of security video cameras to the area of the respective winning EGM.

15. The system as claimed in any one of claims 3 to 14, wherein the master controller includes an accounting system for gathering accounting information from each of the venues participating in the multiple venue jackpot system, and means for a calculating jackpot pool for each venue based on gaming machine activity at the respective venues.

16. The system as claimed in claim 15, wherein gaming machine activity at each venue is reported to the master controller by the respective front-end processor.

17. A master controller for a jackpot system for providing jackpots on electronic gaming machines (EGMs) operating in a plurality of EGM venues,

each EGM venue having a networked EGM installation including one or more EGMs connected via communications network to a network controller, jackpot awarding means arranged to award jackpot prizes to individual EGMs based on a predetermined trigger condition being established, and reporting means arranged to report gaming activity and jackpot events to the master controller, the master controller being located remotely from at least one of the EGM venues, the EGM installation in each EGM venue maintaining a prize pool from which jackpot prizes are awarded, master controller collecting game statistics from each venue and periodically communicating information to update the prize pool of each EGM installation.

18. The master controller of claim 17, wherein the EGM installation in each EGM venue includes a local jackpot controller and a front-end processor, such that the front-end processor monitors the operation of local jackpot controller, and the EGMs in the network and gathers statistics for forwarding to the master controller and the master controller includes communication means for receiving communications from the front-end processors at each EGM venue and returning prize pool information to each venue.

19. The master controller of claim 18, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is encrypted.

20. The master controller of claim 18 or 19, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via e-mail.

21. The master controller of claim 20, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is transmitted over the internet.

22. The master controller of claim 18 or 19, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via reports printed on paper.

23. The master controller of claim 18 or 19, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data recorded on a recordable media.

24. The master controller of claim 23, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data recorded on a magnetic media.

25. The system of claim 24 wherein, communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via floppy disc.

26. The system of claim 24 wherein, communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via magnetic tape.

27. The system as claimed in any one of claims 18 to 26 wherein, the master controller includes an accounting system for gathering accounting information from each of the venues participating in the multiple venue jackpot system, and means for a calculating jackpot pool for each venue based on gaming machine activity at the respective venues.

28. The system as claimed in claim 27 wherein, gaming machine activity at each venue is reported to the master controller by the respective front-end processor.

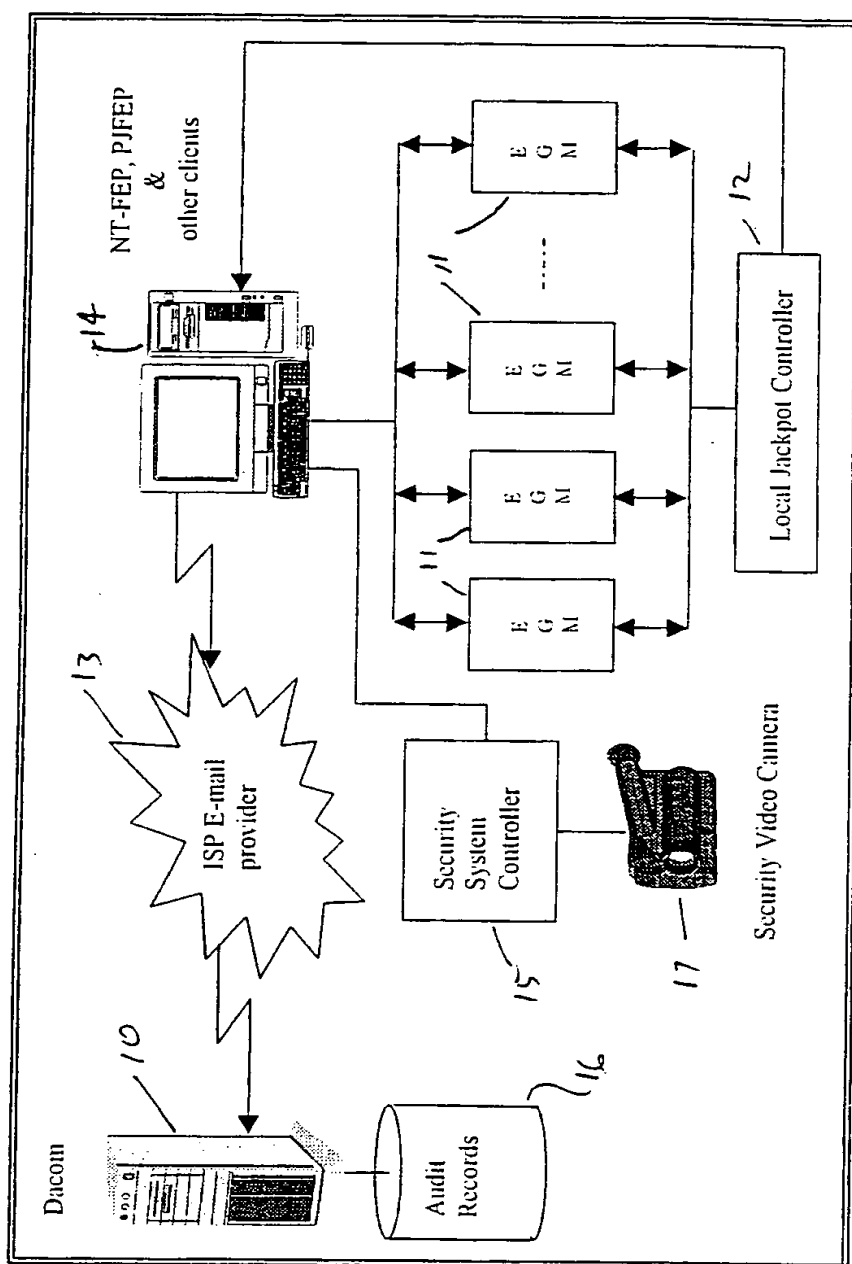


Figure 1.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/AU00/01165

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

Int. Cl. ⁷: G06F 19/00, 161/00; A63F 13/12

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC G06F, A63F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

AU: IPC AS ABOVE

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

WPAT, USPTO

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	WO 9712338A, WINTech INVESTMENTS PTY LTD, 3 April 1997	1-6, 17-19
X	US 5655961A, ACRES et al, 12 August 1997	1-5, 17, 18
X	AU 47907/96A, MAVROIDIS, 26 September 1996	1, 2, 17, 18

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* Special categories of cited documents:	
"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"E" earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date	"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	"&" document member of the same patent family
"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	

Date of the actual completion of the international search 9 November 2000	Date of mailing of the international search report 20 NOV 2000
Name and mailing address of the ISA/AU AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE PO BOX 200, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA E-mail address: pct@ipaustalia.gov.au Facsimile No. (02) 6285 3929	Authorized officer S KAUL Telephone No : (02) 6283 2182

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/AU00/01165

C (Continuation).

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	AU 48323/97A, ARISTOCRAT LEISURE INDUSTRIES PTY LTD, 25 June 1998	
A	WO 9412256A, INFINATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES INC, 9 June 1994	
A	WO 9826361A, JACKPOT AS, 18 June 1998	
P,A	US 6089980A, GAUSELMANN, 18 July 2000	

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT
Information on patent family members

International application No.
PCT/AU00/01165

This Annex lists the known "A" publication level patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report. The Australian Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

*Patent Document Cited in Search Report				Patent Family Member			
WO	9712338	AU	69806/96	CA	2233039	GB	2323303
		NZ	318340				
US	5655961	AU	27192/95	AU	35878/95	AU	48478/97
		AU	74161/98	WO	9612262	US	5702304
		US	5741183	US	5752882	US	5820459
		US	5836817				
AU	47907/96	NONE					
AU	48323/97	NONE					
WO	9412256	AU	57333/94	CA	2128715	EP	627949
		EP	907136	US	5324035		
US	6089980	AU	24938/97	CA	2208188	DE	19624321
		EP	855074	WO	9749073		
END OF ANNEX							

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TREATY
PCT
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT
(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 100604/CO	FOR FURTHER ACTION	See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416).
International Application No. PCT/AU00/01165	International Filing Date (day/month/year) 25 September 2000	Priority Date (day/month/year) 29 September 1999
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC Int. Cl. ⁷ G06F 19/00, 161:00; A63F 13/12		
Applicant ARISTOCRAT TECHNOLOGIES AUSTRALIA PTY LTD et al		

1.	This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.																								
2.	This REPORT consists of a total of 3 sheets, including this cover sheet. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e., sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT). These annexes consist of a total of 4 sheet(s).																								
3.	This report contains indications relating to the following items: <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 5%;">I</td> <td style="width: 5%;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="width: 90%;">Basis of the report</td> </tr> <tr> <td>II</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Priority</td> </tr> <tr> <td>III</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IV</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Lack of unity of invention</td> </tr> <tr> <td>V</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement</td> </tr> <tr> <td>VI</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Certain documents cited</td> </tr> <tr> <td>VII</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Certain defects in the international application</td> </tr> <tr> <td>VIII</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Certain observations on the international application</td> </tr> </table>	I	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Basis of the report	II	<input type="checkbox"/>	Priority	III	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability	IV	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of unity of invention	V	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement	VI	<input type="checkbox"/>	Certain documents cited	VII	<input type="checkbox"/>	Certain defects in the international application	VIII	<input type="checkbox"/>	Certain observations on the international application
I	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Basis of the report																							
II	<input type="checkbox"/>	Priority																							
III	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability																							
IV	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of unity of invention																							
V	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement																							
VI	<input type="checkbox"/>	Certain documents cited																							
VII	<input type="checkbox"/>	Certain defects in the international application																							
VIII	<input type="checkbox"/>	Certain observations on the international application																							

Date of submission of the demand 23 January 2001	Date of completion of the report 19 September 2001	<input type="checkbox"/> The description.
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/AU AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE PO BOX 200, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA E-mail address: pct@ipaaustralia.gov.au Facsimile No. (02) 6285 3929	Authorized Officer J.W. THOMSON Telephone No. (02) 6283 2214	<input type="checkbox"/> The claims.
		<input type="checkbox"/> The drawings.
		<input type="checkbox"/> This report has been completed in accordance with the provisions of the PCT and the Administrative Instructions under the PCT.

I. Basis of the report**1. With regard to the elements of the international application:***☐ the international application as originally filed.☒ the description, pages 1 - 6, as originally filed,

pages , filed with the demand,

pages , received on with the letter of

☒ the claims, pages , as originally filed,

pages , as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19,

pages , filed with the demand,

pages 7 - 10, received on 15 August 2001 with the letter of 9 August 2001

☒ the drawings, pages 1, as originally filed,

pages , filed with the demand,

pages , received on with the letter of

☐ the sequence listing part of the description:

pages , as originally filed

pages , filed with the demand

pages , received on with the letter of

2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language which is:

☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).☐ the language of the translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3).**3. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:**☐ contained in the international application in written form.☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished**4. ☐ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:**☐ the description, pages☐ the claims, Nos.☐ the drawings, sheets/fig.**5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).****

* Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17).

** Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims 1 - 28	YES
	Claims	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims 1 - 28	YES
	Claims	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims 1 - 28	YES
	Claims	NO

2. Citations and explanations (Rule 70.7)

None of the documents cited in the international search report discloses the invention as defined in claims 1 to 28.

The Commissioner of Patents
PO Box 200
WODEN ACT 2606

F B RICE & CO
Sydney NSW
Telephone: 02 9810 7133
Facsimile: 02 9810 8200

9 August 2001

Our Ref: 100604/CO
Contact: Chris Owens

Attention: International Preliminary Examining Authority

PATENTS

Dear Madam

Aristocrat Technologies Australia Pty Ltd, Andre Turnbull
International Patent Application No PCT/AU00/01165
Entitled: "Multiple venue jackpot system"

We refer to the Written Opinion of 5 March 2001, and now take this opportunity to reply as follows.

We note that the Examiner equates the invention claimed in claims 1, 2 & 17 with the disclosures in WO 97/2384A and US 5655961.

We now propose to amend the claims on file to clarify the batch nature of communications between the master controller and the EGM installations which are not directly connected.

It is submitted that this arrangement is not anticipated by the citations relied upon by the Examiner.

We look forward to receiving a favourable International Preliminary Examination Report in due course.

Yours respectfully
F B RICE & CO

CO/ih/h08/genml/100604

CLAIMS:

1. A jackpot system for providing jackpots on electronic gaming machines (EGMs) operating in a plurality of EGM venues, the system comprising a master controller located remotely from at least one of the EGM venues and a
5 networked EGM installation located at each EGM venue, each networked EGM installation comprising one or more EGMs connected via communications network to a network controller, wherein the master controller is not directly connected to the respective communications network of at least one of the EGM networks, each networked EGM
10 installation further comprising jackpot awarding means arranged to award jackpot prizes to individual EGMs in the respective EGM installation based on a predetermined trigger condition being established, and reporting means arranged to periodically initiate a gaming activity report and communicate the gaming activity report to the master controller, the gaming activity report
15 comprising a batch of gaming data representing gaming activity and jackpot events occurring on the respective networked EGM installation during a period of operation preceding the initiation of the report, the EGM installation in each EGM venue maintaining a prize pool from which jackpot prizes are awarded, and the prize pool being periodically updated in response
20 to pool information communicated from the master controller to the respective EGM installation as a batch data transfer in response to gaming activity reports received by the master controller from each of the EGM venues.
2. A jackpot system for providing jackpots on electronic gaming machines
25 (EGMs) operating in an EGM venue, the system comprising a master controlled located remotely from the EGM venue and a networked EGM installation located at the EGM venue, the networked EGM installation comprising one or more EGMs connected via communications network to a network controller, wherein the master controller is not directly connected to
30 the communications network, the networked EGM installation comprising jackpot awarding means arranged to award jackpot prizes to individual EGMs based on a predetermined trigger condition being established, and communications means arranged to periodically initiate a gaming activity report and communicate the gaming activity report to a master controller, the
35 gaming activity report comprising a batch of gaming data representing gaming activity and jackpot events occurring on the respective networked

EGM installation during a period of operation preceding the initiation of the report, , the EGM installation maintaining a prize pool from which jackpot prizes are awarded, and the prize pool being periodically updated in response to pool information provided from the master controller to the EGM
5 installation via the communications mean as a batch data transfer in response to gaming activity reports received by the master controller from each of the EGM venues.

3. The system of claim 1 or 2, wherein the EGM installation in each EGM venue includes a local jackpot controller and a front-end processor, such that
10 the jackpot controller monitors EGM operation, determines the occurrence of jackpot trigger condition, maintains the prize pool information, and awards prizes from the prize pool when trigger condition occurs.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein the front-end processor monitors the operation of local jackpot controller, and the EGMs in the network and
15 gathers statistics for forwarding to the master controller in the gaming activity report.

5. The system of claim 4, wherein the master controller includes communication means for receiving communications from the front-end processors at each EGM venue and returning prize pool information to each
20 venue.

6. The system of claim 3, 4 or 5, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is encrypted.

7. The system of claim 3, 4, 5, or 6, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via e-mail.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is transmitted over the internet.
25

9. The system of claim 3, 4, 5, or 6, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via reports printed on paper.

10. The system of claim 3, 4, 5, or 6, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data recorded on a
30 recordable media.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data recorded on a magnetic media.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via floppy disc.
35

13. The system of claim 11, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via magnetic tape.

14. The system as claimed in any one of claims 3 to 13, wherein the front-end processor communicates with a security system, to indicate the identity of each EGM on which a jackpot has been won, the security system including
5 a security video camera, and the security system being responsive to the indication of the identity of each winning EGM to direct the field of view of security video cameras to the area of the respective winning EGM.

15. The system as claimed in any one of claims 3 to 14, wherein the master
10 controller includes an accounting system for gathering accounting information from each of the venues participating in the multiple venue jackpot system, and means for a calculating jackpot pool for each venue based on gaming machine activity at the respective venues.

16. The system as claimed in claim 15, wherein gaming machine activity
15 at each venue is reported to the master controller by the respective front-end processor.

17. A master controller for a jackpot system for providing jackpots on electronic gaming machines (EGMs) operating in a plurality of EGM venues, each EGM venue having a networked EGM installation including one or more
20 EGMs connected via communications network to a network controller, jackpot awarding means arranged to award jackpot prizes to individual EGMs based on a predetermined trigger condition being established, and reporting means arranged to periodically initiate a gaming activity report and communicate the gaming activity report to the master controller, the gaming
25 activity report comprising a batch of gaming data representing gaming activity and jackpot events occurring on the respective networked EGM installation during a period of operation preceding the initiation of the report, the master controller being located remotely from at least one of the EGM venues, the EGM installation in each EGM venue maintaining a prize pool
30 from which jackpot prizes are awarded, master controller collecting game statistics from the gaming activity report communicated from each venue and periodically communicating batch data information to each of the EGM venues in response to the gaming activity reports received by the master controller from each of the EGM venues to update the prize pool of each
35 EGM installation.

18. The master controller of claim 17, wherein the EGM installation in each EGM venue includes a local jackpot controller and a front-end processor, such that the front-end processor monitors the operation of local jackpot controller, and the EGMs in the network and gathers statistics for forwarding to the master controller and the master controller includes communication means for receiving communications from the front-end processors at each EGM venue and returning prize pool information to each venue.
19. The master controller of claim 18, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is encrypted.
20. The master controller of claim 18 or 19, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via e-mail.
21. The master controller of claim 20, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is transmitted over the internet.
22. The master controller of claim 18 or 19, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via reports printed on paper.
23. The master controller of claim 18 or 19, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data recorded on a recordable media.
24. The master controller of claim 23, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data recorded on a magnetic media.
25. The system of claim 24 wherein, communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via floppy disc.
26. The system of claim 24 wherein, communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via magnetic tape.
27. The system as claimed in any one of claims 18 to 26 wherein, the master controller includes an accounting system for gathering accounting information from each of the venues participating in the multiple venue jackpot system, and means for a calculating jackpot pool for each venue based on gaming machine activity at the respective venues.
28. The system as claimed in claim 27 wherein, gaming machine activity at each venue is reported to the master controller by the respective front-end processor.

Claims (as amended 17/7/01)

1. A jackpot system for providing jackpots on electronic gaming machines (EGMs) operating in a plurality of EGM venues, the system comprising a
5 master controller located remotely from at least one of the EGM venues and
each EGM venue having a networked {EGM} installation located at each EGM
venue, each networked EGM installation including comprising one or more
EGMs connected via communications network to a network controller,
wherein the master controller is not directly connected to the respective
10 communications network of at least on of the EGM networks, each networked
EGM installation further comprising jackpot awarding means arranged to
award jackpot prizes to individual EGMs in the respective EGM installation
based on a predetermined trigger condition being established, and reporting
means arranged to report periodically initiate a gaming activity report and
15 communicate the gaming activity report to the master controller, the gaming
activity report comprising a batch of gaming data representing gaming
activity and jackpot events occurring on the respective networked EGM
installation during a period of operation preceding the initiation of the
report to a master controller located remotely from the respective EGM venue,
20 the EGM installation in each EGM venue maintaining a prize pool from
which jackpot prizes are awarded, and the prize pool being periodically
updated in response to pool information communicated from the master
controller to the respective EGM installation as a batch data transfer in
response to gaming activity reports received by the master controller from
25 each of the EGM venues.
2. A jackpot system for providing jackpots on electronic gaming machines (EGMs) operating in an EGM venue, the system comprising a master
controlled located remotely from the EGM venue having and a networked
EGM installation located at the EGM venue, the networked EGM installation
30 comprising including one or more EGMs connected via communications
network to a network controller, wherein the master controller is not directly
connected to the communications network, the networked EGM installation
comprising jackpot awarding means arranged to award jackpot prizes to
individual EGMs based on a predetermined trigger condition being
35 established, and communications means arranged to periodically initiate
report gaming activity report and communicate the gaming activity report to

a master controller, the gaming activity report comprising a batch of gaming data representing gaming activity and jackpot events occurring on the respective networked EGM installation during a period of operation preceding the initiation of the report, to a master controller located remotely
5 from the respective EGM venue, the EGM installation maintaining a prize pool from which jackpot prizes are awarded, and the prize pool being periodically updated in response to pool information provided from the master controller to the EGM installation via the communications mean as a batch data transfer in response to gaming activity reports received by the
10 master controller from each of the EGM venues.

3. The system of claim 1 or 2, wherein the EGM installation in each EGM venue includes a local jackpot controller and a front-end processor, such that the jackpot controller monitors EGM operation, determines the occurrence of jackpot trigger condition, maintains the prize pool information, and awards
15 prizes from the prize pool when trigger condition occurs.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein the front-end processor monitors the operation of local jackpot controller, and the EGMs in the network and gathers statistics for forwarding to the master controller in the gaming activity report.

5. The system of claim 4, wherein the master controller includes communication means for receiving communications from the front-end processors at each EGM venue and returning prize pool information to each venue.

6. The system of claim 3, 4 or 5, wherein communication between the
25 front-end processor and the master controller is encrypted.

7. The system of claim 3, 4, 5, or 6, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via e-mail.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is transmitted over the internet.

9. The system of claim 3, 4, 5, or 6, wherein communication between the
30 front-end processor and the master controller is via reports printed on paper.

10. The system of claim 3, 4, 5, or 6, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data recorded on a recordable media.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data recorded on a magnetic media.
12. The system of claim 11, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via floppy disc.
13. The system of claim 11, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via magnetic tape.
14. The system as claimed in any one of claims 3 to 13, wherein the front-end processor communicates with a security system, to indicate the identity of each EGM on which a jackpot has been won, the security system including a security video camera, and the security system being responsive to the indication of the identity of each winning EGM to direct the field of view of security video cameras to the area of the respective winning EGM.
15. The system as claimed in any one of claims 3 to 14, wherein the master controller includes an accounting system for gathering accounting information from each of the venues participating in the multiple venue jackpot system, and means for a calculating jackpot pool for each venue based on gaming machine activity at the respective venues.
16. The system as claimed in claim 15, wherein gaming machine activity at each venue is reported to the master controller by the respective front-end processor.
17. A master controller for a jackpot system for providing jackpots on electronic gaming machines (EGMs) operating in a plurality of EGM venues, each EGM venue having a networked EGM installation including one or more EGMs connected via communications network to a network controller, jackpot awarding means arranged to award jackpot prizes to individual EGMs based on a predetermined trigger condition being established, and reporting means arranged to periodically initiate a report gaming activity report and communicate the gaming activity report to the master controller. the gaming activity report comprising a batch of gaming data representing gaming activity gaming activity and jackpot events occurring on the respective networked EGM installation during a period of operation preceding the initiation of the report. ~~to the master controller,~~ the master controller being located remotely from at least one of the EGM venues, the EGM installation in each EGM venue maintaining a prize pool from which jackpot prizes are awarded, master controller collecting game statistics from the gaming activity

report communicated from each venue and periodically communicating batch data information to each of the EGM venues in response to the gaming activity reports received by the master controller from each of the EGM venues to update the prize pool of each EGM installation.

- 5 18. The master controller of claim 17, wherein the EGM installation in each EGM venue includes a local jackpot controller and a front-end processor, such that the front-end processor monitors the operation of local jackpot controller, and the EGMs in the network and gathers statistics for forwarding to the master controller and the master controller includes
- 10 communication means for receiving communications from the front-end processors at each EGM venue and returning prize pool information to each venue.
19. The master controller of claim 18, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is encrypted.
- 15 20. The master controller of claim 18 or 19, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via e-mail.
21. The master controller of claim 20, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is transmitted over the internet.
- 20 22. The master controller of claim 18 or 19, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via reports printed on paper.
23. The master controller of claim 18 or 19, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data
- 25 recorded on a recordable media.
24. The master controller of claim 23, wherein communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via data recorded on a magnetic media.
25. The system of claim 24 wherein, communication between the front-
- 30 end processor and the master controller is via floppy disc.
26. The system of claim 24 wherein, communication between the front-end processor and the master controller is via magnetic tape.
27. The system as claimed in any one of claims 18 to 26 wherein, the master controller includes an accounting system for gathering accounting
- 35 information from each of the venues participating in the multiple venue

jackpot system, and means for a calculating jackpot pool for each venue based on gaming machine activity at the respective venues.

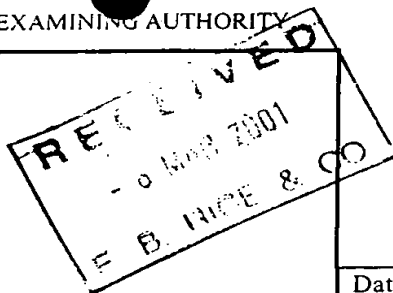
28. The system as claimed in claim 27 wherein, gaming machine activity at each venue is reported to the master controller by the respective front-end processor.

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the:
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY

To:

F B RICE & CO
605 Darling Street
BALMAIN NSW 2041



PCT

WRITTEN OPINION

(PCT Rule 66)

Date of mailing
(day/month/year) **05 MAR 2001**

Applicant's or agent's file reference
100604

REPLY DUE within **TWO MONTHS**
from the above date of mailing

International Application No.
PCT/AU00/01165

International Filing Date (day/month/year)
25 September 2000

Priority Date (day/month/year)
29 September 1999

International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC
Int. Cl.⁷ G06F 19/00, 161/00; A63F 13/12

Applicant

ARISTOCRAT TECHNOLOGIES AUSTRALIA PTY LTD et al

1. This written opinion is the **first** drawn by this International Preliminary Examining Authority.
2. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

I	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Basis of the opinion
II	<input type="checkbox"/>	Priority
III	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
IV	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of unity of invention
V	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
VI	<input type="checkbox"/>	Certain documents cited
VII	<input type="checkbox"/>	Certain defects in the international application
VIII	<input type="checkbox"/>	Certain observations on the international application
3. The applicant is hereby **invited to reply** to this opinion.

When? See the time limit indicated above. The applicant may, before the expiration of that time limit, request this Authority to grant an extension, see Rule 66.2(d).

How? By submitting a written reply, accompanied, where appropriate, by amendments, according to Rule 66.3. For the form and the language of the amendments, see Rules 66.8 and 66.9.

Also For an additional opportunity to submit amendments, see Rule 66.4.
For the examiner's obligation to consider amendments and/or arguments, see Rule 66.4bis.
For an informal communication with the examiner, see Rule 66.6.

If no reply is filed, the international preliminary examination report will be established on the basis of this opinion.
4. The final date by which the international preliminary examination report must be established according to Rule 69.2 is: **29 January 2002**

Name and mailing address of the IPEA/AU
AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE
PO BOX 200, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA
E-mail address: pct@ipaustalia.gov.au
Facsimile No. (02) 6285 3929

Authorized Officer

S KAUL
Telephone No. (02) 6283 2182

I. Basis of the opinion
1. With regard to the elements of the international application:*

- ☒ the international application as originally filed.
- ☐ the description, pages , as originally filed,
 pages , filed with the demand,
 pages , received on with the letter of
- ☐ the claims, pages , as originally filed,
 pages , as amended under Article 19,
 pages , filed with the demand,
 pages , received on with the letter of
- ☐ the drawings, pages , as originally filed,
 pages , filed with the demand,
 pages , received on with the letter of
- ☐ the sequence listing part of the description:
 pages , as originally filed
 pages , filed with the demand
 pages , received on with the letter of

2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- ☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- ☐ the language of the translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the written opinion was drawn on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in printed form.
- ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. ☐ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages
- ☐ the claims, Nos.
- ☐ the drawings, sheets/fig.

5. ☐ This opinion has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).

* Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this opinion as "originally filed"

V. Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims 7-16,20-28	YES
	Claims 1-6,17-19	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims	YES
	Claims 1-28	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims 1-28	YES
	Claims	NO

2. Citations and explanations

NOVELTY(N)

Claims 1-5, 17-18:

D1 WO 971238A, whole document

D2 US 5655961A, whole document

Each of these documents fully discloses the features of the claims

Claims 6, 19:

D1 above fully discloses the feature added in this claim

INVENTIVE STEP(IS)

Claims 1-6, 17-19:

As under novelty above

Claims 7-16, 20-28:

Features added in these claims are either common general knowledge or would be obvious to a person skilled in the art.